

Of Flame

Story: Of Flame

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Summary: Flameshipping one-shot. The Mars Adepts have been arguing a lot lately, and the others have given up and trying to stop them. Why are things between them so tense? Why can't Jenna stop herself from shouting at Gareth? Why can he not stop making Jenna shout at him?

***Chapter 1*: Of Flame**

Hey all, Droory here.

***A little flameshipping idea that came to me one day
when I was sitting in front of ye olde fireplace.
Enjoy.***

The Lemurian ship could be the most peaceful of places at times. Drifting calmly through the Great Western Sea, the saline ocean breeze blowing through the hairs and of those on deck as they rested in the sunshine, the quiet on board was broken only by the sound of the water breaking against the ship as it advanced north. Truly, it was a place, during the rare moments when the Jupiter Adepts' laughter could not be heard, the most peaceful home on Weyard.

That was of course, until the silence was shattered by the voice of one of two Mars Adepts shouting at the other. More often than not, they ended up arguing and over the most frivolous of subjects, from why Gareth may not have set out the cutlery for dinner to Jenna having not healed Gareth right away in a battle. One would have thought the others would have interfered, tried to calm them down and apologise to each other.

That never proved to be a beneficial pursuit for any wishing to preserve their sanity. Quite often, the two ended up rounding on whoever told them to calm down, having found a common enemy to vent whatever frustration was built up within them. So, now, whenever an argument was heard, the rest of the group retreated as far away from the noise as they could so as to enjoy the company of the more docile of the group.

As Mars Adepts, they were irked easily, and it just seemed to build up in them over time until it eventually erupted. Thankfully, the two seemed to be aware of this and vented onto the other rather than wasting their breath on someone who would not sate their need to relax. Always, when the arguments were finished and each had spent a minute or two brooding afterwards, they were laughing together again, telling jokes and making fun of the others.

They complimented each other well, in a way.

Jenna, she was of fire, of flame and heat, burning passion and a boiling temper. She could be a danger to all, threatening to scorch and reduce anything that came close to cinders, and yet, that same danger was necessary. The warmth of her danger, her flames and fire, as akin to her element, bolstered all of those around her, strengthening and reassuring her friends. The power behind all she did was as graceful as a flame itself.

She danced, swirling in the flames she created, beautiful and glowing as she melded to that which was hers. The orange and red radiance that she controlled mixed perfectly with her own palette. From the pleasing smooth tone of her tan skin, to the complimenting tone of her burgundy locks and the wine-red gleam of her bright eyes.

She carried herself with the same grace as her trademarked Serpent Fumes, elegant but deadly. The swirling heat of her flaming lizard the very embodiment of her personality, a snake ready to strike out at whatever wronged her or that she held close. Sadly, this same snake often snapped at her friends, hissing in warning as they approached.

Garet, he was of magma, of the liquid fire, the slow and trudging wall of heat. He kept his friends behind him as he

advanced, he was the guard, the defence, prepared to melt anything that stood in his way. Supporting the earth as he moved forward, he exuded the heat those close to his heart had come to know to protect them, and rolled over that which would bring harm to them. The power behind all he did was of a river of magma itself.

He stood stalwart, surrounded by the fires he brought with him, threatening yet reassuring as he created the heat to attack or defend. The boiling hot glow of his orange power showed who he truly was, highlighting him perfectly. It caught on his bronzed skin, making him glow, as it travelled over his deep auburn eyes and up the extra foot of matching coloured hair.

The same Flare Walls that he created to protect his friends from attackers embodied who he was. Just as the flames would encircle his friends, keeping them warm, and scorching over monsters, he would be at the front of the line, first to attack, first to get hit, so the others could understand the monster and strategize accordingly. This selfless flame often caused others harm as they made to rescue him from his foolish sacrifice.

Indeed... they were very alike, and all aboard wondered why they had to argue so. Though, there did not seem to be a good answer, so leaving it to the Gods to decide, the others carried on as though nothing was out of the ordinary.

As was customary for each day, an argument erupted while everyone was gathered around discussing what to have for dinner. It had all been going perfectly fine until Gareth had said he did not want to cook today. Instantly, Jenna cut across everyone else, who had accepted this as fine and volunteered to cook instead, to berate him.

"What do you mean 'You don't want to'!?" Jenna cried out, slamming her palm into the table between them, "What, are you more important than us are something? Have something better to do than to cook for your friends!?"

Felix and Isaac sighed, quickly meeting everyone's gaze they gestured toward the door leading outside. Everyone nodded and one by one made their way out while Jenna shouted down Gareth. Eventually it was only the two left as the others had all snuck off to their usual hiding spot of the crow's nest together.

"You heard me, I don't want to cook the food tonight! Leave it to one of the others, I'm a terrible cook anyway! All you ever do is complain about it!" Gareth argued back, slamming his hand down, to both reaffirm his point and annoy Jenna by mimicking her.

"That's not the point! And I don't just complain, you can make good food if you bother your ass!" Jenna retorted, *"And don't make fun of me!"* She pointed to Gareth's open palm against the table.

"Don't make fun of me!" Gareth mocked, putting on his best Jenna voice and adding a distinct whine to it.

"Mars you're impossible!" Jenna shrieked as she stormed away to her room.

"Mars you're impossible!" Came Gareth's retort, but Jenna had already reached her room and slammed the door.

Jenna groaned aloud as she bolted her door shut. He really was the most difficult man on Weyard! Couldn't he just, for once, not argue with her and just do what she said!? It's not like she was asking anything impossible here, all she wanted him to do was cook the store of fish they had for that day.

Nice and easy. He could make great fish, and he seemed to enjoy cooking, so what the hell was his problem!?

She sighed deeply, really needing a break from him. She regretted not having anything to do today, anything to occupy her mind and take it away from that infuriating man-child she called her friend. She made her way to her bed and threw herself onto it, crossing her legs and staring up at the ceiling as she chewed on the nothingness in her mouth.

She wouldn't care so much if he could just stop this constant, daily annoyance. It was as though he was *trying* to get on her bad side. To see how far he could push her before she would eventually set him alight. She wouldn't give him the satisfaction though. Gods, he was insufferable. Thinking he could beat her!? HA! The very idea was ridiculous.

The worst thing though, the worst thing of all, was that Jenna wouldn't even mind if he would just admit that's why he did it, just to get a laugh. No, he was too good for that, he was '*justified*' in his side of the argument, '*allowed*' to speak his mind whenever he wanted, and if he wanted to disagree with her that was his choice.

Alright, maybe she goaded him into it sometimes... and maybe she did kind of enjoy letting out some of her frustration. Gods knew she was pissed at the others today too. Sheba had suggested she liked Garet, Felix told her she would be on the night shift of guarding, Ivan had spilled water on her, and Piers would not stop humming some annoying tune. She knew she couldn't really shout at them though, Sheba was her closest friend, and easily brought to tears, Felix was too damned stubborn to give up anything, Ivan would just laugh or turn anything into a joke and Piers would quietly accept what she had to say.

There was no point getting mad at them, but Gareth? She could get mad at him, because she knew he loved it. But if his damned reason for getting her so worked up all the time was because he thought she needed to let loose then she would kill him. Straight up murder him in front of everyone before tossing his carcass overboard. He was so annoying sometimes.

Gareth smirked as he heard the door slam from below, followed shortly by Jenna's trademarked groan. She had needed that, he knew. He had seen how angry she was getting and he didn't much care to see one of his friends get verbally beaten down by Jenna until they couldn't hear anything but an incessant ringing for the next few hours. Gods knew they needed all their senses about them on this ship.

Sure, maybe him getting shouted at wasn't the best course of action, and sure, maybe getting Jenna in such a mood for a short time wasn't the best for her, but it always worked out, they were always friends a few minutes later. He just wanted Jenna happy, really. She hadn't really been the same since Mia and Isaac got together, or Ivan and Sheba. Even though it was a week or two after the whole group meet-and-greet-plus-team-up thing in Contigo that they had gotten together, it still got to her. It was her own fault if she didn't go for Isaac... or Ivan if that were the case, but Gareth assumed the former.

Yeah, shouting back at her probably wasn't the healthiest recovery route, but Gareth admitted that he wasn't the best with this sort of thing. If he tried to sit down and talk with Jenna about it chances were he was going to make things worse, plus be on the tail-end of an ass kicking... and he'd like to avoid that. He liked his ass as it was really... he'd

done a whole lot of squats to mould it into what it was today. And though he somewhat favoured the idea of Mia having to heal it, he didn't like the idea of Piers, Felix, or Isaac having to do it... though that did have its comedic merits.

Fact was: he really cared for Jenna. Hell, he probably never would have left Vale to begin with if she hadn't been taken. He knew that was true for Isaac as well, that was the real reason to go off to stop the Lighthouses being lit. Saving Jenna was *their* quest, the Lighthouses a side-quest, something to do on the way. Sure, he had seen that change for Isaac a little after Colosso, he still wanted to save Jenna, but the Lighthouses were his main thing after it. Then, when they found Felix and the rest were alive, Jenna was pushed to his side-quest, Isaac just wanted to save the world at that point.

Not Gareth, it was always Jenna to him. She had had it rough. Lost her family at a young age, brother coming back from the dead and kidnapping you, being forced to go on a life-threatening quest to save the world... not a fate he'd wish on anyone, especially not someone like Jenna. Really, he just wanted her kept safe, something he should have been good at, he could do it in battle no problem, but otherwise he seemed to pretty much suck at it.

Garet sighed to himself, it had been about ten minutes now, none of the others had come back from wherever they went when an argument started up, and Jenna was still locked up her room, probably wishing that he was getting beaten by Felix for yelling at her. Rubbing his hands together, and preparing for what could be another fight, Gareth made his way downstairs.

Okay, so Gareth wasn't so bad. He was a good friend after all, and he looked out for her during battles and stuff, hell, even bought some extra spices and stuff because he knew she liked that with her food. He wasn't such a bad guy... so then why did he have to be so unbearable!? Gods, if she could get him to come out and say why he shouted back, rather than be a sane person and just accept what she had to say like the others did, maybe she could tolerate it.

She just wished that every time they had a fight she didn't feel so bad afterwards. Guilt, or something like that always caught in her throat as she stormed away to brood in her room. Maybe it was because she knew this wasn't his fault, it was no one's fault really. Isaac had chosen Mia, and she was fine with that. She had gotten over her crush on him two years ago, it didn't even bother her to see them holding hands or flirting or doing anything '*relationship-y*' at all. She was happy for the two of them, as happy as she was for Sheba when Ivan had first kissed her.

She didn't know what was wrong with her. She wished she did. It's not like she wanted to get into these fights every day, even if she did enjoy them a bit, even if they helped her get a lot of stuff off of her chest. Maybe she felt so bad because she knew Gareth was a good guy, a great friend... maybe it was just something she could not explain. Maybe something had changed in their dynamic during their time apart and had gone unnoticed but caused this in them. They used to fight in Vale, but, it was never as bad as this.

Three knocks against her door stirred her from her thoughts, and she realised that she had been crying. Blinking at the incredulousness of this and wiping the tears away, ready to blame Gareth or them if the need arose, she climbed off her bed, smoothened herself out and opened the door.

Her casual demeanour sank into a heavy frown as Gareth's form came into her view, "*Oh, it's you.*" She addressed, rolling her eyes, though really she didn't mind. She just needed to keep up appearances.

"*Yeah, it's me. Something wrong with that?*" Gareth asked, knowing this would irk her. He was unsure of why he had said it seeing as he came here to apologise.

"*No. Should there be?*"

"*You're making it seem that way.*" Gareth knew he should stop, but he couldn't help himself. He could tell something was still wrong with the girl, "*What the hell's the matter?*"

"*Nothing, what the hell do you mean what's the matter?*" Jenna sighed, casting her gaze around, not taking him seriously, trying not to get annoyed by him so soon after their last fight.

Gareth pushed forward a bit, pre-empting any attempt Jenna might make to slam the door in his face, "*I mean exactly what I said. I get your pissed at me at the minute, but what's really wrong with you?*"

"*Nothing.*" Jenna answered, though she felt her voice shake, she just wanted to come out and say it. What she now realised, why she shouted at Gareth so much. She should have realised it earlier... she liked him. As more than a friend though. How the hell could she just come out and tell him now though? She had to remain in her stubborn state of hate for a while, she couldn't just let him win.

"*Don't lie to me.*"

"*I'm not lying.*" Jenna pushed, trying to close the door.

Garet held it open, "*What's wrong?*"

"*Nothing.*" She kept trying to close the door.

Garet repeated his question again, holding the door firm. As strong as Jenna had become over the course of the journey, she was still no physical match for Garet.

"*Nothing's wrong! Will you let go of the door!?*" Jenna shouted, pushing the door so hard against him she could hear the ancient Lemurian wood straining under the force.

"*Not until you tell me what's wrong!*" Garet yelled back.

Letting go of the door, knocking Garet off balance, before shoving him out into the hall, Jenna yelled at him, "*I like you, alright!? There, I said it, have your little laugh and leave me alone. You're what's wrong, alright!?*"

Jenna couldn't believe she let her heart pour out to him like that, sounding like her liking him was something that hurt her, that was wrong. Tears began to flow along Jenna's eyes because of how uncaring she had just been, and what Garet had made her do. He was the one who pushed her to this. Gods, he really was impossible. Couldn't he have just left her alone, left her to come to terms with this knowledge herself, process it, then deal with it however she wanted.

Garet for the most part, seemed unfazed. He stood up slowly, dusting himself off, and then wrapped his arms around Jenna. Immediately responding to it she wrapped one of her arms around him, pulling him closer and started pummeling his chest with her other free hand. Garet just stood there accepting both her return of the care, and her venting her frustration, because that's why he was there for her, to help her out of it all.

He knew he hadn't dealt with this in the best way. He could have admitted to Jenna that he liked her, maybe that would have got her to calm down, but the chances were equally high that she would have just got in an argument with him about it. Really, he should have consulted Piers... or Isaac... or Ivan... or Kraden... or Mia... or Sheba... hell, even Felix, on how to properly approach this matter. This was not the best start to a relationship, if there was to be one after this, but hey... he could repair any damage he caused, he was sure... well... he hoped.

Jenna shook her head against his warm, broad chest, ridding her eyes of her tears, before she looked up at him. He was smiling down at her, a hand came to her face to wipe away a tear.

"I'm sorry."

"You're impossible." Jenna sighed as she looked into his eyes.

"I know." He shrugged, *"But so are you."*

"/-" Jenna made to retort, offended, but Gareth had curtailed her, leaning down and pressing his lips into hers.

Her anger vanishing, Jenna wrapped her arms around his neck and pulled him closer, and down to her level considering how much taller he was than her, to deepen the kiss. They stayed there in each other's arms, relishing the other's warmth for what could have been a minute, it could have been an hour, before they finally broke apart smiling.

Jenna tilted her head a bit, wanting to complain about how much taller he was than her, to call him impossible for how difficult it was to kiss him when he stood a foot and a half taller than her, but she chose not to, simply taking his hand

in hers and guiding him back upstairs. The two settled on one of the couches in the common room and continued kissing each other for a while before taking a nap in each other's arms.

***Well, there you go. My first official flameshipping fic.
Not exactly the typical couple dynamic, but hey, it
was fun to write.***

Please review!

Thanks for reading!

***Your friend and writer,
Droory***

P.S.

***I was prompted to write two semi-crack endings... so
here they are, the first follows right after this.
If you want this fic to remain sane and serious (to a
degree), stop reading here... it quickly devolves...***

Felix awoke, stretching as he looked up at the blue sky again. It was customary to take a nap whenever an argument started at this point, and it was customary for the whole group to nap in the crow's nest. It was well protected from the elements, sturdy, and surprisingly comfy to lie down there. He rubbed his eyes and yawned, shaking the others as he got up.

"Another great way to spend a great day, gang. Gods bless Lemurians and their soundproof wood." Ivan said as he kissed Sheba on the forehead, "Think they've calmed down?"

Kraden checked a small timepiece that he always kept with him, *"My word, it's been an hour, I'd certainly hope they've*

reached an understanding."

"They probably did, but then got into another argument."

Isaac said, helping Mia up from her position beside him,

"Ivan, you've been nominated to go check."

"Agreed." The entire group voiced in unison, to Ivan's great disappointment.

Ivan, accepting his fate, clambered down the ladder, still yawning and stretching. He loved those naps. Gods, he hoped those two had shut up for now. He really didn't want to have to deal with their noise. Pushing open the door to the lower decks slowly, Ivan listened for any noise. Amazed by the peace, he called up to the others, signalling the all clear.

Pushing himself into the room, now realising he was hungry, since they had been scheduled to have dinner half an hour ago, Ivan made for the kitchen. He never made it of course, because his eyes caught the two Mars Adepts snuggled together on the couch.

His mouth breaking out into a wide open smile, he stood still and pointed at them, hopping up and down excitedly, really more as a show of hilarity for the others. One by one the others came in and followed Ivan's ecstatic pointing to the couch. All but Felix smiled at the scene, before the realisation that this probably meant peace for the remainder of the journey hit them and they let out a simultaneous cheer, awaking the two Mars Adepts.

Immediately the two flushed and began yelling at their friends for waking them up when they had been so comfortable. Sighing, they all ran back outside to hide.

Smirking at their triumph, Gareth and Jenna snuggled back together and closed their eyes.

And the second is an alternate version of the last argument.

"I love you, alright!?" Jenna yelled, sick of this ridiculousness.

"Well...I...I love you too!" Gareth retorted, unprepared for that exclamation.

"Alright then!" Jenna shouted back, really unsure of where this was going, *"What are you gonna do about it!?"*

"I... I think I'm gonna kiss you!" Gareth yelled, grabbing her by the hips and pulling her closer.

"Yeah, well... well you damn well better!" Jenna yelled back as she threw her arms around his neck and pulled him ever closer.

"Oh, I'm gonna!" Gareth shouted, before planting his lips firmly against hers.

"HEY!" Felix yelled, having rushed down when he had heard what they were shouting, *"I am NOT okay with this!"*

But the two Mars Adepts didn't care what Felix was or was not okay with and continued to kiss, much to Felix's dismay as he stormed away, shouting something about killing them later on.

So... not only my first flameshipping fic, but also my first fic with multiple endings. That's something, eh? Wow, you actually read the optional endings... didn't expect that... THANKS!

Please review!

***Your friend and writer,
Droory***